

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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-----031623 070635Z /11

P R 070406Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9733
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USMISSION USNATO
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PARIS 11461

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PERPR, MOPS, CU FR ET
SUBJECT: CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING WITH
FRENCH FONMIN DE GUIRINGAUD

REF: (A) STATE 83310, (B) PARIS 10880,
(C) HAVANA 852

SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH CUBANFOREIGN MINISTER
APRIL 3 FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD EXPRESSED
FRENCH DISQUIET OVER CONTINUED CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE
IN ETHIOPIA AND NOTED THAT THE SITUATION IN ERITREA
IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT IN THE OGADEN AND THE USE OF
FORCE LESS EASILY JUSTIFIED. MALMIERCA TOLD GUIRINGAUD

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CUBAN MILITARY WILL REMAIN IN ETHIOPIA AS LONG AS
ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT DESIRES, WITH MISSION TO PROTECT
ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND THE ATTAINMENTS
OF THE REVOLUTION. BEFORE ANY WITHDRAWAL SOMALIA
MUST RENOUNCE ALL TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAINST ITS
NEIGHBOR. (THIS A PRECONDITION FOR CUBAN WITHDRAWAL
BUT NOT SUFFICIENT IN ITSELF TO BRING IT ABOUT.)

CUBA PREFERS POLITICAL SOLUTION IN ERITREA BASED ON ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND CONSIDERATION OF NATIONAL RIGHTS OF ERITREAN PEOPLE. ETHIOPIA JUSTIFIED IN USING FORCE IN ERITREA. CUBA HAS NOT YET DETERMINED ITS POSITION ON WHETHER TO ASSIST ETHIOPIA MILITARILY IN THE OGADEN. DE GUIRINGAUD WARNED THAT FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN ERITREA FIGHTING RISKED INTERNATIONALIZING THE CONFLICT. HE PROPOSED REGIONAL CONFERENCE TO ESTABLISH BASIS FOR LASTING PEACE IN HORN. MALMIERCA SAID THE IDEA OF A CONFERENCE WORTH CONSIDERATION. END SUMMARY.

1. ON APRIL 3 CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER ISIDORO MALMIERCA PAID A CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD AT THE QUAI. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING THE QUAI ISSUED A SHORT STATEMENT AS FOLLOWS: "THE MEETING WAS DEVOLTED TO THE EXAMINATION OF BILATERAL PROBLEMS AND THE HORN OF AFRICA. THE TWO MINISTERS AGREED ON THE NECESSITY OF SETTLING PROBLEMS OF THE REGION ON THE BASIS OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF STATES."

2. WE INQUIRED OF QUAI OFFICIALS WHETHER THIS STATEMENT, WHICH GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF FRENCH INDIFFERENCE TO THE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE HORN, ACCURATELY REFLECTED THE TONE OF THE CONVERSATION. WE WERE TOLD THAT IT DID NOT AND ON APRIL 5 WE WERE GIVEN A BRIEFING
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BY QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR FRANCOPHONE AFRICA (GUEGUINOU) ON THE BASIS OF THE OFFICIAL FRENCH MEMORANDUM OF THE CONVERSATION.

3. READING FROM THE FOUR PAGE SUMMARY OF THE MEETING GUEGUINOU SAID THAT MALMIERCA HAD BEGUN WITH A STANDARD JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN AFRICA: IT WAS AT THE REQUEST OF SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO ASSIST IN PROTECTING THEIR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IN BOTH CASES WEHERE THE CUBANS HAD ENGAGED IN FIGHTING IT WAS THE RESULT OF FOREIGN AGGRESSION -- SOUTH AFRICA IN THE CASE OF ANGOLA, SOLMALIA IN THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA. IN THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA THERE HAD BEEN ALSO THE FACTOR THAT SOMALI AGGRESSION THREATENED TO LEAD TO THE DISINTEGRATION OF ETHIOPIA. GUIRINGAUD REPLIED THAT FRANCE SHARED CUBA'S CONCERN FOR THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN STATES. NOW THAT SOMALIA HAD WITHDRAWN FROM THE OGADEN, HOWEVER, ONE MUST ASK WHAT PURPOSE FOREIGN TROOPS SERVED. FRANCE WAS CONCERNED AT THE CONTINUED CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWED FIGHTING IN ERITREA. ERITREA HAS A "DIFFERENT DOSSIER" FROM THE

OGADEN AND THE JURIDICAL BASIS OF THE STRUGGLE THERE
IS DIFFERENT.

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4. MALMIERCA SAID THAT CUBAN TROOPS WILL REMAIN IN
ETHIOPIA SO LONG AS THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT DESIRES
IN ORDER TO PROTECT ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY
AND "THE ATTAINMENTS OF THE REVOLUTION." IT IS
NECESSARY THAT THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT DECLARE ITS
RESPECT FOR THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS.
(COMMENT: WHILE THIS SOMALI ACTION WAS GIVEN AS A
PREREQUISITE TO CUBAN WITHDRAWAL, IT WAS CLEAR FROM
THE CONTEXT THAT SUCH A DECLARATION WOULD NOT IN ITSELF
DETERMINE THE WITHDRAWAL. END COMMENT). MALMIERCA
SAID THAT CUBA FAVORS A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE
ERITREAN PROBLEM BASED ON RECOGNITION OF ETHIOPIA'S
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION
THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE ERITREAN PEOPLE. ETHIOPIA
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IS LEGALLY JUSTIFIED IN USING FORCE TO REESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS WITH MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS IN ERITREA. CUBA DOES NOT CONSIDER THIS CONDONING OF FORCE TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH ITS DESIRE FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. MALMIERCA TOLD GUIRINGAUD THAT THE CUBAN POSITION ON THE USE OF ITS TROOPS TO AID ETHIOPIA IN ERITREA HAD NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED.

5. GUIRINGAUD REPLIED THAT CUBAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FIGHTING WOULD RISK INTERNATIONALIZING THE ERITREAN SITUATION WITH UNFORSEEABLE COMPLICATIONS. MALMIERCA SAID THAT CUBA WAS CONSCIOUS OF THIS RISK GIVEN THE INTERESTS OF A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN THE ERITREAN CONFLICT.

6. GUIRINGAUD SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATES IN THE REGION AS A MEANS OF BRINGING PEACE TO THE HORN. IN THE CONTEXT OF SUCH A CONFERENCE AIMING AT AN OVERALL SOLUTION IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR SIAD BARRE TO GIVE THE NECESSARY ASSURANCES CONCERNING SOMALIA'S NEIGHBORS WITHOUT LOSING FACE. MALMIERCA SAID THAT IT WAS AN INTERESTING IDEA WHICH HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER. IT WAS PREMATURE TO GIVE ANY COMMITMENTS. AS THERE HAD BEEN VIRTUAL IDENTITY OF VIEWS ON THE QUESTION OF THE NECESSITY OF RECOGNIZING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE STATES OF THE REGION, THE TWO MINISTERS HAD DECIDED THAT THIS WOULD BE INCLUDED IN A DECLARATION AFTER THE MEETING.

7. COMMENT: GUIGUINOU, WHO BRIEFED US, HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT AT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE MINISTERS AND WAS THEREFORE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON THE TONE OF THE
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MEETING. FROM THE SUMMARY OF THE CONVERSATION IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT GUIRINGAUD HAD BEEN VERY TOUGH ON THE QUESTION OF THE CUBAN PRESENCE. IT MIGHT BE, HOWEVER, THAT HE DID NOT FEEL THE NEED TO DOCUMENT HIS VIEWS IN DETAIL AND THE RECORD THEREFORE DID NOT FULLY REFLECT THE TENOR OF HIS REMARKS. IN OUR DISCUSSION WITH GUIGUINOU WE NOTED SEVERALTIMES THAT THE BLAND TONE OF THE DECLARATION AFTER THE MEETING CONTRASTED WITH THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS -- MOST RECENTLY THE PRESIDENT IN LAGOS -- OVER THE CONTINUED CUBAN AND SOVIET PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA.

8. ON THE SUBJECT OF WHETHER AN AFRICAN POLICY MEETING
IS GOING ON IN MOSCOW, THE QUAI VIEW IS PROBABLY NOT.
SO FAR AS THEY ARE AWARE THE CUBAN FONMIN WAS LEAVING
FOR HAVANA. ACCORDING TO THEIR EMBASSY IN LUANDA
NETO HAS BEEN AILING FOR SOME TIME AND THE VISIT IS
INDEED FOR THE PRIVATE PURPOSE OF GETTING MEDICAL
ATTENTION.
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